

University of Dayton eCommons

News Releases

Marketing and Communications

4-26-2001

Setting a National Example: UD, Dayton Public Schools Team Up to Produce Teachers for Urban Schools

University of Dayton

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls

Recommended Citation

University of Dayton, "Setting a National Example: UD, Dayton Public Schools Team Up to Produce Teachers for Urban Schools" (2001). *News Releases*. 10421.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/10421

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marketing and Communications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in News Releases by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu, mschlangen1@udayton.edu.



April 26, 2001
Contact: Pam Huber
Huber@udayton.edu

NEWS RELEASE

SETTING A NATIONAL EXAMPLE: UD, DAYTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEAM UP TO PRODUCE TEACHERS FOR URBAN SCHOOLS

DAYTON, Ohio — In what may be the first partnership of its kind in the country, the University of Dayton and Dayton Public Schools will join forces in the Urban Teacher Academy, designed to prepare future teachers for urban schools, UD and DPS officials announced today.

As part of the program, veteran Dayton teachers will mentor students for the final two years of their bachelor's degree program, which includes the student teaching assignment, and for the first one to three years of their teaching careers.

Four UD students have been chosen to begin the program this fall. When they graduate, they'll be given first consideration for jobs in the Dayton Public Schools system, and all efforts will be made to place them in the same schools as their mentors. New teachers and their mentors will receive stipends for taking part in the program.

It's an exciting departure from standard practices, say UD officials.

"Historically, universities have been oriented toward generic teacher preparation," said Tom Lasley, dean of the School of Education and Allied Professions at UD. "We are seeing a need for specialized teacher education preparation practices for particular school contexts, as we've recognized with our Lalanne program to prepare teachers for Catholic schools and now with the Urban Teacher Academy to prepare teachers for urban schools."

The new partnership is also a reflection of the University's Catholic and Marianist character, he said.

"The University is absolutely committed to urban schools and to preparing teachers to deal with the complexities, social and academic, of teaching children in an urban environment. The world of the new millennium will be increasingly diverse, and Dayton is the sixth poorest

-over-

OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
300 College Park Dayton, Ohio 45469-1679
(937) 229-3241 (937) 229-3063 Fax
www.udayton.edu

school district in the nation. The University has a moral obligation to do all it can to prepare students to work with Dayton's K-12 schools," Lasley said.

The Urban Teacher Academy will become one aspect of an ambitious plan to reorganize Dayton Public Schools to better serve the community.

"This is clearly a wonderful opportunity for Dayton Public Schools to work with a local teacher preparation institution, to literally grow our own teachers," said Jerrie Bascome McGill, superintendent of Dayton Public Schools. "For the University of Dayton to commit to channeling people into our urban setting is highly commendable.

"These students will reap the rewards of getting to know who children are in an urban environment, and a wonderful by-product is the impact they will have on the seasoned teachers into whose classes these young people will go," McGill said.

In addition to regular coursework, UD students chosen for the Urban Teacher Academy will attend intense and targeted seminars on topics such as discipline and the effect of poverty on culture and education. They'll meet with their mentors in conjunction with each seminar to define expectations and discuss real-life experiences.

Studies have shown that committed teachers can be an important factor in helping children in urban schools succeed.

"Teachers are extremely important. Teacher quality is of a similar order of importance as parents' education," said Ronald F. Ferguson, education researcher and lecturer in the Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy in the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. "My belief is that teacher education programs can potentially make a big, positive difference. Hopefully, programs such as the one that the University of Dayton is beginning will provide a big boost to the effectiveness of future urban school teachers."

The U.S. Department of Education estimates that 2 million new teachers will be needed in America's public school classrooms over the next decade. Teacher turnover is particularly high in inner-city schools, and, with 70 percent of its 20,000 students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunches because of low family income, the Dayton school district has many of the challenges faced by high-poverty school districts.

"We've identified UD students who seem to have a talent for urban settings," explained Bickley Lucas, co-director of the Urban Teacher Academy and a former Dayton Public School

-more-

Sophomore Justin Clifford, an early childhood education major from South Bend, Ind., is one of the four UD students chosen for the initial Urban Teacher Academy class. "I went to public schools — not inner-city like Dayton, but very diverse — so all my life I've been involved with all types of cultures and races. The intrinsic benefits offered by the experience sounded like something I couldn't pass up."

While job security wasn't the most important benefit of the package, Clifford said it did offer an advantage. "I'm one of the few college sophomores to know where I'll be come graduation day," he said.

Dayton Public School mentors will receive a stipend of \$2,000 per year for advanced coursework at UD, professional development, conference travel, personal technology and buying educational resources. If they choose to allocate the money for personal use, the cap will be \$1,000 per year.

The Urban Teacher Academy joins other programs UD has in place to bolster urban education. The Urban Principal Academy is designed to bring Dayton school principals together to explore effective leadership characteristics and ways to improve schools. Initiatives at nearby Patterson Kennedy International Heritage Academy include creating a "cyber-café," an interactive learning environment complete with computers, educational software, high-speed Internet access, instruction and programming.

Additional initiatives include continued field experience and student teaching for pre-service teachers in Dayton schools, tutoring service-learning opportunities during and after school, a lead-based paint education program, exposure to biology and geology science lessons, parent education programs, international student programs, technology education, science fair judging and teacher in-service.

A planning grant of \$35,000 was provided for the Urban Teacher Academy project by the Jennings Foundation. The program will continue under a matching University of Dayton grant.

-30-

For media interviews, contact **Tom Lasley** at (937) 229-3146 or via e-mail at thomas.lasley@notes.udayton.edu, **Jerrie Bascome McGill** at (937) 542-3052, **Bickley Lucas** at (937) 767-7775 or via e-mail at BicLucas@aol.com, **Barbara White** at (937) 898-5054, **Justin Clifford** at (937) 627-5360 or via e-mail at cliffoje@notes.udayton.edu and **Ron Ferguson** at (617) 495-1104 or via e-mail at Ronald_Ferguson@harvard.edu.